

**Hamilton Affordable Housing Trust
Teleconference**

March 10, 2021

HAHT Members Present: Chair Marnie Crouch, Jamie Knudsen, Hunter Carroll, and William Massos

HAHT Members Absent: David Smith

HAHT Coordinator: Pat Shannon

**This meeting was teleconferenced via Zoom with all of the above participants remaining at home.*

ROLL CALL

Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) Interim Chair Marnie Crouch called the AHT meeting to order at approximately 6 p.m. and took a roll call. Four members were present: Hunter Carroll, Jamie Knudsen, and William Massos along with Ms. Crouch, which constituted a quorum.

APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE 2/10/2021 MEETING

Mr. Knudsen made a motion to approve the Feb. 10, 2021 meeting minutes. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was taken with "ayes" from Mr. Carroll, Mr. Knudsen, Mr. Massos, and Ms. Crouch, (4-0) unanimous among those present.

UPDATE OF 59-63 WILLOW ST.

Ms. Crouch reported that the Willow Street property was acquired by Traggorth Companies LLC and was proceeding to a closing. The AHT is contributing \$500K to the project. Ms. Crouch, AHT Coordinator Pat Shannon, and Town Manager Joe Domelowicz Jr. met and determined it advisable to consult Town Counsel. One of the ways the projects are governed is through what is known as MassDocs, which provides a common set of loan documents for projects using a variety of state and local funds. The Town now has a Mass Docs Counsel to represent its interests and those of the AHT. The AHT will still have the opportunity to review the note, mortgage, and restriction that will apply to the affordable units within the project, she said, but the closing will go much smoother by having one counsel (the MassDocs counsel) representing all the municipal lenders. There will be another counsel for the private lenders and well as for Traggorth and other entities. It is a complicated deal with many documents to be executed. Fencing was put up at the property and some site work has begun. She said as soon as the company (now called Willow Street

Hamilton LLC) pulls the building permit, 18 units will be added to the Town's subsidized housing inventory (SHI). Mr. Shannon said it is expected to be a 12-month project.

UPDATE ON 434 ASBURY ST. HABITAT FOR HUMANITY PROJECT

Ms. Crouch reminded everyone that the AHT granted \$35K to Essex County Habitat for Humanity for the purpose of securing an extension on the option to purchase the Asbury Street property. According to the latest status report from Habitat, it seems that Habitat is now seeking another extension. Ms. Crouch is not sure what the extension may cost, but Habitat has not come back to the AHT to request funds for it. Septic plans for the project are in process. Ms. Crouch asked the AHT if it wanted to invite Don Preston and Meegan O'Neil of Habitat to the next meeting. Mr. Knudsen suggested the AHT get back to Ms. Crouch about that sometime prior to the next meeting.

One of the conditions the AHT placed on funding the Habitat project is that Habitat give the AHT a monthly status report. Ms. Crouch said she would have liked more detail in the most recent report that was submitted March 8. It was discussed in general that the project is a good one. Mr. Massos asked Ms. Crouch if she thought the project would stay on schedule or experience delays. Ms. Crouch said she believes it might be delayed since it needs to be done in phases [due to securing the funding in phases]. Mr. Massos said that doing the project in stages adds complexity since the foundations can't all be done at once. One concern Ms. Crouch has is that while Habitat has an option on the property, it doesn't have site control yet.

Mr. Knudsen asked if it would be helpful for the AHT to email Habitat with specific questions and obtain responses to the questions every couple of weeks. Ms. Crouch read the section from the commitment letter, which Mr. Shannon had forwarded to the members, pertaining to the AHT wanting a status report within five business days of the first of every month. She asked Mr. Knudsen if he could produce the list of questions and send it to Mr. Shannon for forwarding to Habitat. It was noted that even if Habitat wasn't at a particular stage yet, it could answer the questions accordingly. The point was to help Habitat stay on track and give an outline showing the kinds of information the AHT was seeking.

UPDATE ON GORDON CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY DEVELOPMENTS

Ms. Crouch said David Smith was not present this evening to report on the Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary (GCTS) Task Force but his watch word was to remain "patient." GCTS is negotiating with a developer and is committed to affordable units. There are approximately 200 apartments or dorm spaces, so the new developer with whom the college is negotiating has said one third of the units will be affordable, one third will be reserved for students, and one third will be market-rate.

Mr. Massos asked about how units would count toward the SHI. That is unknown as it is unknown whether the housing reserved for students qualifies as affordable housing. If the

affordable units are half of the total number of the units, the Town would receive credit for all of the units.

ACCEPT RESIGNATION OF WILLIAM MASSOS. EFFECTIVE APRIL 15, 2021

Because Mr. Massos is moving out of Town, he is unable to continue to serve on the AHT. Ms. Crouch thanked him for his service and asked if he knew anyone interested in replacing him on the Trust. He said he was trying to think of people who had similar skillsets to him. Due to audio/technical difficulties during the meeting, the AHT was unable to hear what Mr. Massos had said. *[When asked after the meeting to fill in what he had said, Mr. Massos emailed a statement saying he had joined the AHT in June 2017 when the actions of the Trust were extremely controversial. He said the Trust had been unsuccessfully proposing the development of every piece of town-owned land into affordable housing. Since his joining of the AHT, he said the AHT refocused its efforts and started productively working with developers. As a result of the shift, for which he credited former AHT Chair Russ Tanzer, he said the AHT had made strides and he sees great promise in the opportunity with GCTS.]*

NEW BUSINESS

It was brought up by Mr. Massos and then briefly discussed by Ms. Crouch that before the Planning Board was a consideration of extending the business district north along Route 1A to include the Winthrop School property. She said Governor Charlie Baker's Housing Choice Law passed and is now in effect, which means there is an impetus to have the part of Town within a half-mile radius of the commuter station available for multi-unit housing as of right. This is quite high-density, she said, and while it makes sense to have affordable housing close to the commuter rail, Hamilton has a constraint in that each property must have its own septic system since there isn't a town sewer system. Director of Planning & Inspections Patrick Reffett is looking into whether Town bylaws may need to be changed to conform to the new law.

Mr. Massos said the AHT should keep in mind that Patton Park and other open space downtown is prime real estate for anything and that the Town needs to be careful how they use these resources. The Winthrop School property is 14 acres and would be attractive to potential buyers due to its access to the downtown and commuter rail. Mr. Shannon said new guidance on the MBTA community keeps coming out and there are still unknowns. Ms. Crouch said it was hard to review the law since the amendments aren't yet written into the document and you have to go back and forth between the original text and amendments. She asked Mr. Shannon to keep the AHT posted if he learns more about the law.

SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING


To be announced. It was reiterated that Mr. Knudsen and Mr. Shannon will work together to have the questions list sent to Habitat.

ADJOURN

Mr. Knudsen made a motion to adjourn the meeting of the AHT at approximately 6:50 p.m. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was taken with "ayes" from Mr. Massos, Mr. Carroll, Mr. Knudsen, and Ms. Crouch, (4-0) unanimous among those present.

Mr. Massos said he appreciated the opportunity to have served on the AHT and was thanked by the other members for his service.

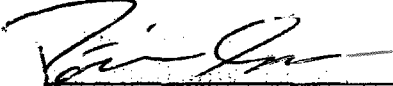
Prepared by:

 4-21-21

Mary Alice Cookson
Minutes Secretary

Date

Attest:

 4/21/21

Patrick Shannon
AHT Coordinator

Date

Documents discussed at meeting:

- Minutes of the 2/10/2020 Meeting by Minutes Secretary Mary Alice Cookson
- Update on 434 Asbury St. Habitat for Humanity Project, from Donald Preston to Pat Shannon and Meegan O'Neil
- Resignation of William Massos from the AHT, email from William Massos to Marnie Crouch
- AHT Commitment letter to Habitat.